(c) whether Government has intervened at every step to create corporate monopolies in food system from seed to domestic production and trade including the food processing to liberalize import and export oriented agriculture to corporate retail; and

(d) if so, the concrete measures and steps Government has taken to check food crisis in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) No, Sir. The country is not witnessing any food crisis. Adequate stocks of foodgrains are available in the country.

(b) On account of effective foodgrains supply management coupled with a slew of price control measures, the country experienced a very moderate price rise in comparison to the international prices over at least last one and a half years.

(c) and (d) No, Sir. The Government promotes over all policy of inclusive and equitable economic growth necessary for sustainable development to knit and integrate economically and socially challenged sections of society into mainstream and draw them into a cycle of growth, development and empowerment, eventually broadening and deepening the spectrum of growth. Therefore, Government has taken various short-term fiscal, administrative and monetary measures, besides medium-term strategy initiatives to ensure adequate availability of food stocks in the country at affordable prices, addressing interests of all the stakeholders.

Privatisation of sugar factories

2067.MS. SUSHILA TIRIYA: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to privatize sugar factories;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) the number of such companies that are proposed to be privatised?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) to (c) M/s Ganesh Sugar Mills, a unit of M/s Swadeshi Mining & Manufacturing Co. (SMMC) Ltd., which stood vested with National Textiles Corporation (UP) Ltd., after nationalization of Swadeshi group of mills in 1986, was lying closed. Due to continuous losses, SMMC was declared sick by the Board of Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR). The Hon'ble High Court, Allahabad, *vide* its order dated 09.09.2008 has, *interalia*, directed that the NTC (UP) Ltd. to invite expression of interest for revival through joint venture from interested parties by making all India advertisement on the leading newspapers and submit proposal to the Court.

There is no other sugar company which is under the administrative control of the Central Government.

Report of price monitoring cell regarding price rise

2068.SHRI AMIR ALAM KHAN: Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Price Monitoring Cell has recently submitted a report regarding rise in prices of essential commodities;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the names of the commodities reported therein along with the comparative figures of their present prices and those prevailing during the corresponding period last year?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION (DR. AKHILESH PRASAD SINGH): (a) and (b) The PMC prepares agenda Notes for the consideration of various decision taking bodies in the Government on a continuous basis.

(c) The retail prices of essential commodities *viz.*, rice, wheat, atta, gram, tur/arhar, masoor, moong, urad tea, milk, sugar, vanaspati, mustard oil, groundnut oil, potato, onion and salt, as monitored by the PMC, in Delhi as on 11.12.2008 and prices prevailing during the corresponding period last year are given in table below.

Retail prices of select essential commodities

Commodity	Current Price 11/12/2008	1 Year Back 11/12/07
Rice	22.00	16.00
Wheat	13.00	12.00
Atta	14.00	13.00
Gram dal	35.00	36.00
Tur dal	50.00	42.00
Urad dal	46.00	37.00
Moong dal	45.00	36.00
Masoor dal	60.00	38.00
Sugar	21.00	17.00
Groundnut oil*	111.00	121.00
Mustard Oil*	77.00	66.00
Vanaspati	57.00	62.00
Tea (Loose)	141.00	109.00
Milk@	21.00	20.00
Potato	9.00	9.00
Onion	20.00	11.00
Salt (Packed)	11.00	10.00

Source: State Civil Supply Corporation